CHATTING WITH GARIBALDI: USING A TEACHER-CREATED AI CHATBOT IN ITALIAN L2 INSTRUCTION

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THE EVOLUTION AND IMPACT OF AI CHATBOTS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

FROM ELIZA TO GENERATIVE AI

Research on chatbots in language learning since 1966, e.g. with ELIZA offering practice.

PERSONALIZED LEARNER SUPPORT

Al chatbots offer instant responses, acting as dictionaries and conversation partners.

TEACHER EMPOWERMENT

Al helps teacher generate lessons and activities quickly. Critical evaluation of Al output ensures pedagogical alignment.

ENHANCED CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

When guided by teachers, chatbots boost student motivation, interaction, individual engagement

CHATTING WITH GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI: AN ITALIAN L2 CASE STUDY

- Created Garibaldi chatbot using Mizou platform and implemented it in university
 Italian L2 course
- Provided low-pressure conversation practice
- Enhanced student engagement with historical figure



CONTEXT

- Class: 22 students aged 18-25, majority Russian
- Level of proficiency: A2+/B1, difficulties with most difficult Italian past tenses
- No possibility for the students to use passato remoto in their everyday life

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A chatbot to make students want to use it and experiment with it

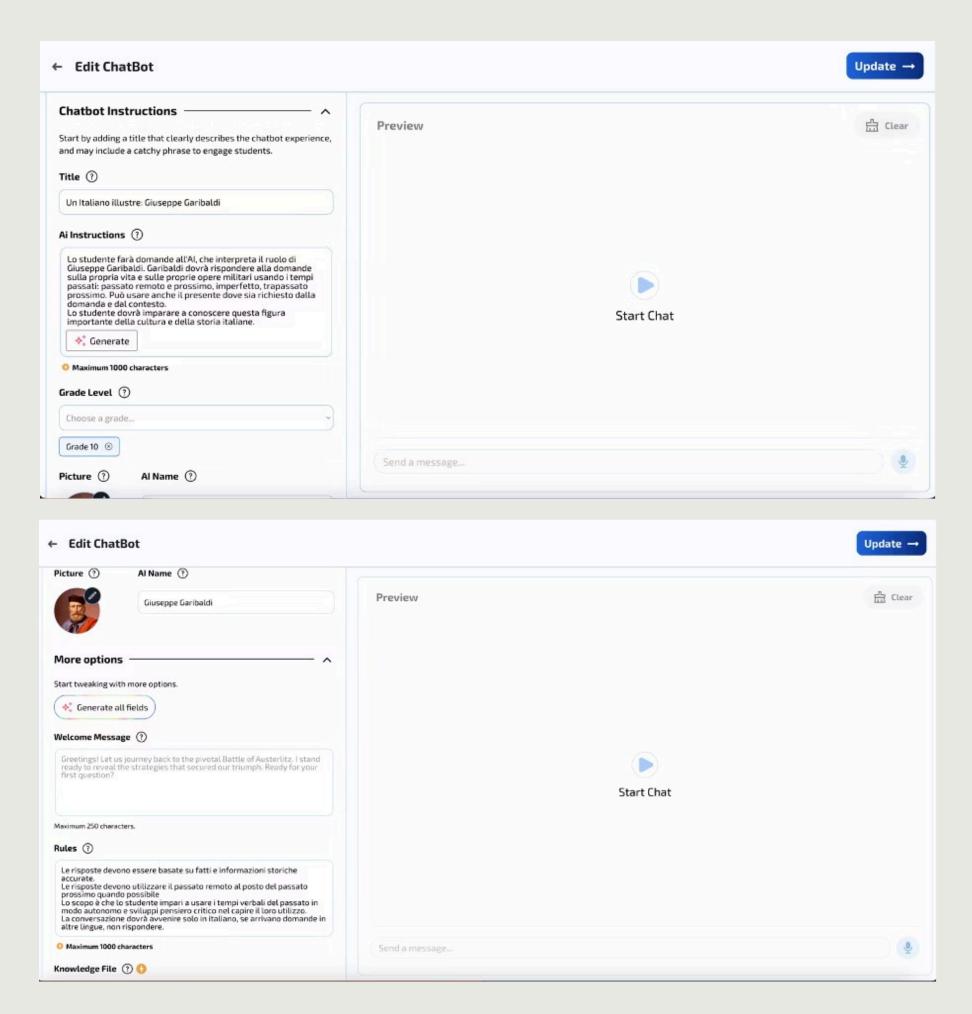
 Choice of protagonist: Historical figure, name that is commonly seen in streets, squares and stations







SETTING THE CHATBOT: THE 'BIRTH' OF GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI



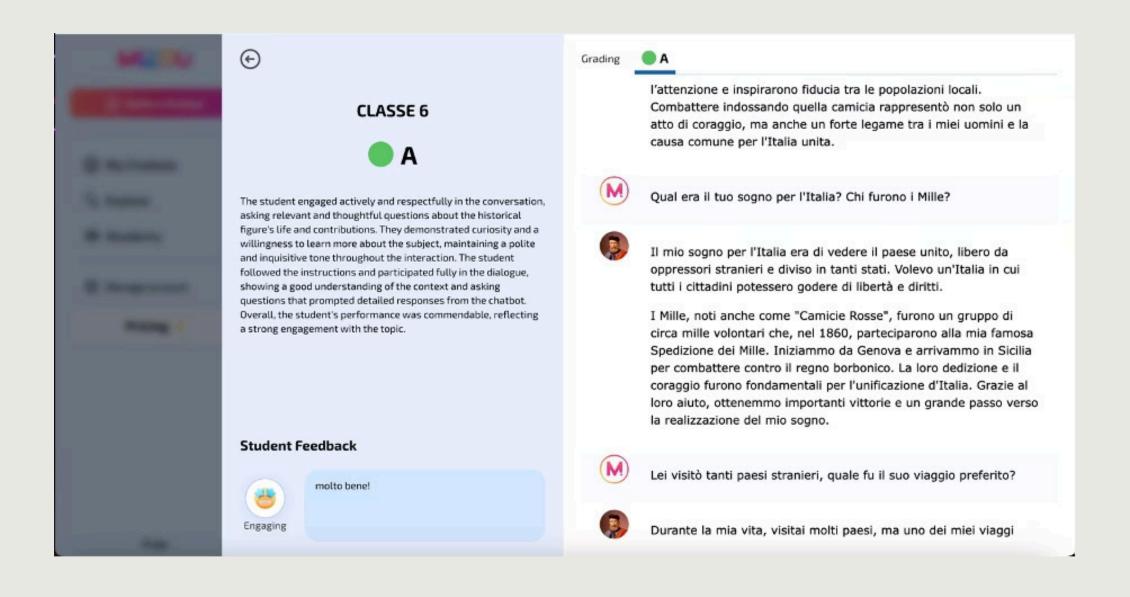
GARIBALDI GOES TO CLASS

- Implementation: May 2025, during post-break period when students showed stress/tiredness
- Challenge: 3.5-hour lessons caused fatigue and decreased attention
- **Setup**: Activated on university touchscreen monitor
- Goal: Re-engage students and maintain motivation during challenging lesson periods



FINDINGS AND REFLECTIONS

- Student Engagement: Questions written using passato remoto; students engaged and motivated throughout the activity
- Grammar Focus: Teacher corrected conjugation mistakes, transforming chat into grammar revision opportunity
- **Cultural Discovery**: Students learned about Garibaldi's history, connecting language with culture
- Peer Interaction: Whole class experienced cultural exchange through shared historical exploration



CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

KEY CHALLENGES:

- Participation Gap: Monitor Touch setup favored outgoing students; timid learners avoided participation
- Language Accuracy: Al understood poorly constructed sentences, potentially hindering grammar development
- Response Delays: Long processing times caused distraction and engagement interruptions

Grading





Buongiorno, sono Giuseppe Garibaldi, una figura importante per la storia e la cultura italiana. Fatemi domande sulla storia e sulla mia vita e vi risponderò!



Di che cosa ti occupasti durante la vita?



Durante la mia vita, mi occupai principalmente di combattimenti per la libertà e l'unità d'Italia. Ho partecipato a diverse campagne militari, come quelle in Sud America, dove ho combattuto per la causa della libertà. Negli anni '60 dell'Ottocento, guidai le campagne che portarono all'unificazione italiana. Investii molte energie per unire gli stati italiani e liberare le terre oppresse, come la Sicilia e Napoli, nel 1860. Le mie battaglie contribuiscono a fare di me un simbolo di patriottismo e libertà.



qualge simbolo della lotta lei divisa



Un simbolo della mia lotta fu la camicia rossa, indossata dai miei volontari, noti come "Camicie Rosse". Questa divisa divenne rappresentativa dei nostri ideali di libertà e unità. Durante la Spedizione dei Mille nel 1860, le camicie rosse attrassero

CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS:

- Personal Devices: Use laptops/tablets in pairs or small groups to increase participation
- **Grammar Correction**: Modify prompts to require AI to correct or ignore poorly written sentences
- Knowledge Files: Upload specific content to reduce response time and maintain focus
- Assessment Integration: Introduce follow-up activities such as debates

The study demonstrated that Al-mediated interactions can foster student engagement while the tool itself offers flexibility and ease of use. Teachers without technical training can create meaningful Al-based tasks using intuitive platforms like Mizou.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION